

Antiquities Advisory Board

Consultation Paper on the Urban Renewal Authority Bill

The Antiquities Advisory Board (AAB) discussed the paper at its meeting on 26 October 1999 and was pleased to note the importance of heritage preservation was fully endorsed by the Chief Executive under his Policy Address (Para. 133) which stated that the concept of preserving our heritage should be incorporated into all projects for redeveloping old areas. It would be one step forward for the new Urban Renewal Authority (URA) to be empowered for direct resumption of the land required and that affected property owners would be compensated under the Lands Resumption Ordinance.

2. Upon the completion of the territory-wide survey on historical buildings and structures, about 8,000 buildings have been identified with historical significance. The AAB was concerned about how these historical buildings would be preserved. Regular maintenance should be provided by the URA to historical buildings preserved under the various redevelopment programmes to ensure building safety.

3. The preservation of historical buildings on group basis within a large area, like Yau Ma Tei, Wan Chai, Sheung Wan and Sai Ying Poon, etc., was strongly recommended to give substantial support on the heritage aspect of the sustainable development in the 21st century. Apart from the promotion of heritage tourism, it would foster the sense of belonging and identity of the public and expand the creativity of the younger generation through the visualized history of Hong Kong.